Leave No Trace (LNT)

**Objective:**

* To gain a basic understanding of the seven principles of Leave No Trace

# Materials:

* Handouts of LNT principles, each with each different principle highlighted
* 10 blank flipcharts
* Two prepared flipcharts: one with the LNT mission, and one with the seven principles of LNT
* Markers
* Colored Pencils
* A small ball for tossing to the students
* Complete handouts of LNT for each student (to be given out at the end of lesson)
* Prepared poster and skits highlighting one principle of LNT

**Application:**

Activity 1: Warm-up (5 min.)

Toss a ball around to the participants, and tell them when they catch the ball they must say one word. The word must be something they see in the forest, good or bad, beautiful or ugly.

Activity 2: Introduction of LNT Material: (5 min.)

* What is Leave No Trace?
* Go through the LNT mission (use prepared flipchart). Have a participant read the mission statement.
* Explain the mission in your own words. What does LNT mean to you?
* Introduce the seven principles (from flipchart). Have participants read them.

Activity 3: LNT Presentation Preparation: (Explanation 7-8 min., example 5 minutes)

Explain to the participants that they will each be responsible for teaching one of the principles to the class.

Break participants up into 6 groups.

The facilitator will be responsible for the 1st principle, which they will do by example.

When the participants are in their groups, pass out the 6 handouts on the LNT principles. Each group will receive a handout with a different principle highlighted.

Each group must prepare three things.

* A poster paper with the title of the principle, and bullet points explaining the meaning, specifics, guidelines, and concepts of the principle.
* A skit demonstrating how not to follow the LNT principle.
* A skit demonstrating how to follow the LNT principle.

Each group must keep their principle a secret from the other groups.

As an example for students present the first principle in the form of two skits and a poster. This should be prepared ahead of time. Make sure the students understand the process. Let the students begin, giving them ten minutes to read about their principle, and prepare the poster and two skits. You may encourage drawings as well.

Activity 4: LNT Principles Presentation: (30 min.)

When all the groups have finished preparing you may begin the presentations. Groups may go in any order.

* Participants will first perform the skit that demonstrates how not to follow LNT principles.
* After each group performs their first skit, have the other students guess what principle the group is breaking.
* The group will then present their poster of the principle guidelines, concepts, and ideas.
* Finally each group will present their skit, which demonstrates how to follow each LNT principle.

Activity 5: Sum-up: (5 min.)

When all the presentations are completed review all the seven principles. Ask the participants who were not in the presenting group what they learned about each of the seven principles.

To get them thinking, ask them how some of these principles could possibly be applied and used in our communities.

Materials adapted with permission from:

**Leave No Trace, Center for Outdoor Ethics, Colorado, USA**

Adaptedby Eric R Jacobs, US Peace Corps, Ukraine, Economic Development, Group 28

*Leave No Trace Mission:*

Leave No Trace is an idea that promotes the careful and thoughtful use of natural, cultural and historical places. By leaving no trace, you can allow others and yourself to enjoy special places over and over again. Seven principles of Leave No Trace outdoor ethics are listed below followed by a brief description of each principle.

## The Seven Leave No Trace Principles:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare: Knowing where, when and why you are going to a place is important in planning. Know what your need and what you should you will be prepared for (weather, food, water, etceteras). Knowing what is available where you are going is another important question to ask. By planning a trip well, you will be much less likely to leave a permanent trace on the place you visited.

* Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you will visit.
* Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
* Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
* Visit in small groups.
* Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
* Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rocks or flags.

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces: Try to travel in places where you will leave less trace of your visit. Walking on an existing path will damage an area less than creating a new path. Walking on rocks may be better than walking on grasses.

Durable surfaces include trails, campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.

* Protect wetland areas by camping at least 100 meters from lakes and streams.
* Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
* In popular areas:
  + Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
  + Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
* Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent, and do not cut fire wood from live trees.
* In pristine (untouched by man and in complete natural condition; often deep forests, high mountain areas or islands) areas:
  + Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
  + Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

3. Dispose of Waste Properly: Garbage or litter is one of the worst problems facing the environment, but it is an easy problem to solve. Your waste is your responsibility.

* + - *Pack Out What You Pack In*. If you bring it into nature with you, you should bring it back out.
    - Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods and either cover with dirt or wash it away.
    - Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
    - Pick up litter left by others. Good examples will change people’s attitudes.
    - Deposit solid human waste in cat-holes (small pits) dug 150mm to 200mm deep at least 100 meters from water, camp, and trails. Cover and try to disguise the cat-hole when finished.
    - Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products. If you do not pack them out, burn them in a fire. Do not just bury them, as animals will dig them up.
    - To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 100 meters away from camp, streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater over a wide area.

4. Leave What You Find: Historical and natural wonders are rare and very often cannot be recreated. If you are lucky enough to visit historical places and natural wonders, leave them for the next person to enjoy.

* Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Once they are gone they cannot be remade. Ask yourself, would you like to show this to your children?
* Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them. Nature takes a long time to make things. Enjoy what is around you and allow nature to work, next time you may see something a little different.
* Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species. Leave plants and animals in the environment they belong. Bringing plants and animals to new places can be dangerous for them or for the plants and animals already there.
* Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches and try not to move logs or rocks when you are picnicking or camping. Use what is already there.

5. Minimize Campfire Impacts: Fire is useful, it can be fun and educational, but it also can scar the environment.

* Campfires can cause lasting impacts to nature. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light when ever possible.
* Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
* Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand. Do not cut wood from standing trees. Also try not to use too much wood; it is a part of nature’s food cycle. Without dead trees there will be fewer mushrooms and other forest foods.
* Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes or pour water of the fire. Do not leave unburned paper in the pit.

6. Respect Wildlife: Leave animals alone and in time you will see more and more.

* Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach wildlife.
* Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers. It may also put you in danger, as animals will attack if they are sick or trying to protect their young.
* Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely. When ever possible hang food from a tree or between poles.
* Control pets at all times, or leave them at home. It not a good idea to bring your pets into nature. They can be in danger from wild animals or may get lost.
* Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors: Treat other visitors as you would want them to treat you.

* Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
* Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
* Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering horses, mules or donkeys.
* Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
* Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises; you will hear more by saying less.